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Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Philippines

Summary

The present report was prepared pursuant to Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) and subsequent resolutions. It covers the period from 1 December 2009 to 30 November 2012 and is the third report of the Secretary-General on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Philippines to be submitted to the Council and its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. The report provides information on grave violations against children, identifies parties to the conflict responsible for such violations and describes progress made on dialogue, action plans and other child protection commitments in the Philippines.

The report includes developments regarding the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and its breakaway faction, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters; the New People's Army (NPA); the Abu Sayyaf Group; and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. It also presents measures taken towards implementation of the United Nations-MILF Action Plan, signed in August 2009, to halt and prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict; engagement with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, the political arm of NPA, on the protection of children affected by armed conflict; and dialogue with the Government of the Philippines on the development of an AFP strategy on children and armed conflict.

Finally, the report provides a series of recommendations to all parties and actors concerned with a view to ensuring the better protection of children in conflict-affected areas in the Philippines. In particular, all parties are urged to engage with the United Nations on the negotiation or full implementation of action plans. The international community is encouraged to assist with the development and implementation of such action plans, including through the allocation of resources.

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I. Military, social and political developments in the Philippines

1. The President of the Philippines, Benigno Aquino III, assumed office in June 2010. With a view to bringing peace to the Mindanao region, the Aquino Administration has prioritized conflict resolution through peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines/New People's Army (NDFP/NPA), and has committed itself to investing in responsive social programmes that address the root causes of conflict. Guided by its peace and development framework, *Payapa at masaganang pamayanan* (PAMANA), or "Peaceful and prosperous communities", the Administration has aimed to reduce poverty in conflict-affected areas through community infrastructure, delivery of social services, improved governance and capacity-building of communities. Throughout 2009, the Government of the Philippines enacted a number of special laws that penalize the use of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment committed by government agents and other persons in positions of authority (Republic Act 9745), as well as crimes under international humanitarian law, genocide and crimes against humanity committed by State and non-State actors (Republic Act 9851). Moreover, on 1 November 2011, the Government ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

2. While the reporting period has generally seen a decline in the number of large-scale armed hostilities, low-intensity conflict continued in one fourth of the more than 42,026 villages or *barangays* in the Philippines, mainly in the Visayas and Mindanao. The security situation largely improved during the second half of 2009 until the Maguindanao massacre, in November 2009, an armed attack related to clan-based violence in which more than 50 persons were killed. This event triggered a major political realignment in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and prompted the Government to deploy, in mid-July 2010, troops of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to the province to conduct military offensives to defuse the conflict between warring clans. These intermittent armed clashes between rival clans, otherwise known as *rido*, continued to affect the situation in Mindanao during the reporting period, often leading to large-scale displacement of the civilian population. Owing to this prevailing situation of insecurity, at the time of writing, nearly 70,000 persons remain displaced, 80 per cent of whom are women and children.

3. In December 2010 the Government requested the Malaysia-led International Monitoring Team to extend its duty, with a view to creating a stable environment for the resumption of Government-MILF peace talks scheduled for early 2011. The presence of the Team, together with the joint AFP-MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH), has proven to be an effective tool in the reduction of skirmishes in Mindanao. In October 2012 the Government and MILF signed a framework for a comprehensive peace agreement, providing momentum to accelerate the full implementation of the United Nations-MILF action plan. The framework agreement ensures specific social protection mechanisms for vulnerable groups in Bangsamoro areas, with particular emphasis on women and children. The local elections in ARMM, initially scheduled for August 2011, were postponed by Republic Act 10153 in order to synchronize national and local elections planned for May 2013, which renewed tensions in Mindanao. Since October 2012, a number of incidents have occurred that involve the use of improvised explosive devices during registration of voters and candidates.

4. Meanwhile, NDFP, the political wing of NPA, declared a 19-day Christmas ceasefire, from 16 December 2010 to 3 January 2011, as a precursor to negotiations between the Government and NDFP scheduled for mid-January 2011, with the aim of preparing the groundwork for larger peace talks scheduled to be held in Oslo in February 2011. The Government reciprocated and observed the suspension of offensive military operations as a confidence-building measure. However, NPA-related security incidents continued to occur throughout the reporting period, often coinciding with the commemoration of anniversaries of the armed group or its leaders. A gradual increase in NPA attacks was observed from June to December 2012, which related to the lack of progress in the peace talks, the arrest of NPA fighters and AFP military raids on NPA camps. In May 2013 the Government announced that the peace talks with NDFP/NPA had collapsed after three years of negotiations. A fresh surge in armed hostilities ensued.

Armed Forces of the Philippines

5. In the context of *Bayanihan*, the internal peace and security plan of the Government of the Philippines, AFP has made efforts to institutionalize human rights principles in its overall security operations. In 2011 the AFP Human Rights Office launched its handbook on human rights and international humanitarian law to serve as a resource for training of the military, and as a guide for the conduct of operations. The plan also paved the way for stronger collaboration between the military and civilian agencies, especially in efforts that aim to address the causes of conflict, thereby signalling a more civilian rather than a military approach to conflict resolution. With regard to the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU), Executive Order 546 (2006) permits AFP to provide logistical, material and tactical support to these force multiplier groups sanctioned by the local Government. These groups, in principle, are tasked with supporting AFP in areas vulnerable to conflict. AFP recruits and trains the CAFGU cadres, whereas regular CAFGU members are locally recruited and supervised. In this regard, AFP conducted a workshop for non-commissioned officers and enlisted personnel acting as "mobile training teams" to CAFGU detachments, with specific focus on relevant national legislation, international humanitarian law and child rights.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

6. The number of armed skirmishes between AFP and MILF significantly decreased in 2010 and 2011, and practically ceased in 2012. After the initial reciprocal suspension of military operations, talks were initiated between the Government and MILF in 2012, under the auspices of the Government of Malaysia. In June 2010 a joint declaration of continuity for peace negotiations between the Government and MILF was issued, leading to the formal resumption of peace negotiations in 2011. In April 2011 the Government and MILF negotiating panels reaffirmed their commitment to security and immunity guarantees, and agreed to resume the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group, a joint mechanism to address criminal activities in the areas influenced by MILF. Following formal talks, held in October 2012, the parties signed a framework agreement that sets out the principles and mechanisms towards the realization of a new political entity, called "Bangsamoro", to replace ARMM.

Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters

7. During the formal Government-MILF peace talks in April 2011, MILF confirmed that commander Kato remained part of their organization but had formed a splinter faction called the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM), with, as an armed wing, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). When the MILF leadership imposed a deadline of 26 September 2011 for commander Kato to rejoin the Front and disband BIFM, he refused to do so. While peace negotiations between the Government and MILF continued in August 2012, BIFF conducted a series of attacks against AFP in Maguindanao province, displacing at least 39,000 civilians. This offensive was jointly condemned by the Government and MILF negotiating panels as an attempt to derail the peace process. BIFF-initiated skirmishes persisted in October 2012, as the talks between the Government and MILF progressed into the signing of a framework for a peace agreement. As of August 2012, MILF was coordinating with AFP to prevent further BIFF attacks. BIFM continued to make public statements opposing the peace talks, stating that they compromised the call of the Moro people for a separate Bangsamoro State.

New People's Army

8. Formal talks between the Government and NDFP resumed in February 2011. The Government negotiating panel reaffirmed previous agreements and both parties agreed to an accelerated time frame of 18 months to complete the substantive agenda on socioeconomic, political and constitutional reforms, the end of hostilities and the disposition of forces. The Joint Monitoring Committee for the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, in place since 2004, was also reconvened to discuss its operational functionality, including the consolidation of complaints and the conduct of joint investigations. Further negotiations, however, were stalled until mid-2012, after which both parties agreed to meet informally to discuss a sustained resumption of negotiations. The talks were scheduled to take place in Norway in October 2012. However, the Government did not meet the NPA precondition to negotiate the release of 18 prisoners and concern remained over the implementation of a ceasefire, the use of landmines and the application of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees. In May 2013 the Government announced that the peace talks with NDFP/NPA had collapsed after three years of negotiations. A fresh surge in armed hostilities ensued.

Abu Sayyaf Group

9. Although reportedly decreasing in strength, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) remains active in the provinces of Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and the Zamboanga peninsula. Kidnap-for-ransom remains endemic in western Mindanao, with ASG perceived to be at the centre of such criminal activity. Extortion and ideologically motivated attacks have been on the rise during the reporting period. Despite its dwindling command, an increase was observed in the number of ASG-initiated attacks throughout the reporting period. In October 2011 armed hostilities between AFP and ASG displaced over 28,000 individuals in Basilan and Zamboanga Sibugay. The government strategy towards ASG is a combination of military and law enforcement operations, while ASG continues to conduct attacks against government forces and officials. There is no formal dialogue between ASG and the Government. The ongoing kidnap-for-ransom activities by ASG render humanitarian access to Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and the Zamboanga peninsula extremely challenging.

II. Grave violations against children

10. Grave violations against children continued to be perpetrated by all parties in the Philippines throughout the reporting period. The country task force continued to face some challenges regarding monitoring and reporting on violations. The limited number of verified incidents can be attributed to the lack of funding and limited human resources capacity for the implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism, and to security constraints for monitors, which affects access to the particularly remote areas of concern. A significant portion of south-western Mindanao continues to be restricted for United Nations travel, in particular areas where NPA, BIFF and ASG are present. As a result, the information contained in the present report is believed to be only indicative of the real number of violations against children. In the period under review, the parties to the conflict responsible for grave violations against children include MILF and its breakaway faction BIFF, NPA, ASG as well as AFP, and its associated CAFGU. The most affected regions continued to be western and central Mindanao and the Visayas. The most recurrent violations were killing incidents affecting schools, followed by the killing and maiming of children and the recruitment and use of children.

A. Recruitment and use of children

11. In the reporting period, the country task force received reports of 51 incidents of recruitment and use of children, which involved at least 59 children. These cases include at least 52 boys and 7 girls from 10 to 17 years of age. The majority of these cases refer to the use of children in support functions.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

12. Despite the signing of the United Nations-MILF action plan in 2009 and the subsequent issuance of the supplemental general order, MILF continued to train children and provide them with weapons and uniforms. The country task force recorded 12 incidents of recruitment and use of children that implicate MILF. Of these, seven incidents were verified, involving 16 boys from 13 to 17 years of age and one 17-year-old girl. The children were used for combatant and support roles, including as sentries and messengers, maintaining weapons and transporting ammunition.

13. Some of the aforementioned children wore full fatigues and carried bandoliers with ammunition. In September 2010 the country task force verified that the MILF 106th Base Command was using children in combat and non-combat roles. Three boys from 13 to 16 years of age were seen dressed in full fatigues and carrying automatic weapons at a public event. In early 2011 the country task force verified two incidents of children carrying automatic weapons and performing military duties. Seven boys from 12 to 16 years of age were seen armed and in uniform. In July 2012 the country task force verified the recruitment of children by the 103rd Base Command in Lanao del Sur province. Two children, a 16-year-old boy and a 17-year-old girl, described their daily activities as MILF recruits, including martial arts training and weapons maintenance.

14. Children associated with MILF are usually not forcibly recruited; rather, they are drawn into participation owing to social influences and economic pressures.

Many children considered to be associated with MILF live in their own communities and sometimes still attend school. This poses specific challenges related to the identification of children associated with MILF and to the separation of these children from the group.

Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters

15. Since July 2011, credible allegations were received regarding the recruitment of children as young as 10 years of age by BIFF, led by commander Kato. Credible reports indicate the presence of young girls carrying automatic weapons and chanting slogans. In August 2012 it was reported that dozens of children were present in a BIFF training camp, marching, executing drills and undergoing a graduation ceremony. Owing to security restrictions, these allegations could not be verified at the time of writing.

New People's Army

16. NDFP continued to claim that its military wing, NPA, does not recruit children for direct participation in hostilities. NDFP, however, stated that NPA does not adhere to the definition of recruitment and use of children set out in the Paris Principles of 2007, and admits that it recruits, trains and uses children for non-combat purposes. However, children continue to be injured and killed in hostilities as an immediate result of their association with NPA. Twelve incidents of the recruitment and use of children by NPA were recorded that involved eight boys and six girls. Of these, the country task force verified four incidents that involved four girls from 14 to 17 years of age and three boys 16 years of age. The children testified that their association with NPA involved combat and non-combat roles. In September 2011, for example, the country task force verified the association of a 16-year-old girl with NPA in Negros Oriental Province. Her commanders knew her age and tasked her with conducting community outreach seminars and other support functions. She travelled with the armed group, stayed in their encampment and was trained in combat techniques and the use of weapons.

Abu Sayyaf Group

17. During the period under review, the country task force received reports of six incidents of recruitment and use of children attributed to ASG, involving at least 17 boys from 13 to 17 years of age. Although the country task force was unable to verify all incidents owing to security constraints, the consistency of these reports demonstrates that ASG actively recruits children and uses them to conduct kidnap-for-ransom activities and for combat roles. Information indicates that families receive financial compensation for the participation of their children in ASG activities and that the prospect of material reward remains the prime motivational force. The country task force verified the recruitment of 10 boys from one community in Basilan province in 2011-2012. Reports further suggested that children participated in ASG combat operations against AFP in Sulu and Basilan provinces. On 14 September 2012, for example, a 13-year-old boy armed with an M-203 grenade launcher was killed during an armed encounter with AFP.

Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit

18. The country task force received 14 reports of use of children by AFP and 7 by the associated CAFGU. Incidents involving AFP were generally related to the use of children as guides and informants in military operations against NPA. In most reported incidents children remained associated with AFP battalions from a couple of hours and up to a few days, and later escaped or were released. These incidents pose serious threats to the physical safety of children and expose them and their communities to risks of retaliation by NPA elements.

19. In April 2011, AFP conducted a military operation in Abra province, in which children were used as informants and were questioned about the location of military camps and community members sympathetic to armed groups. In May 2011 a 13-year-old boy in Kili municipality, Abra province, was forced to guide members of the 54th Infantry Battalion in pursuit of NPA fighters. The community pleaded for his release and the boy was allowed to return home after a day. In July 2012 members of the 57th Infantry Battalion forced two young boys, 12 and 13 years of age, to accompany them on an NPA pursuit operation in North Cotabato province. The children escaped after several hours and returned home.

20. While concrete measures have been taken by AFP to ensure that children are not recruited into CAFGU, including the issuance of directives, incidents show that CAFGU units have used children mostly while operating in remote areas. In April 2011 a 14-year-old boy in Lambayong municipality, Sultan Kudarat province, was identified as a CAFGU member, seen in a uniform carrying a rifle and providing security at a public event. In June 2011 a 16-year-old male member of CAFGU was killed in Surigao del Sur province in an NPA ambush.

21. The country task force also observed that AFP continued to publicly release the names and pictures of children, labelling them as alleged members of armed groups, a practice which poses serious protection concerns. Throughout the reporting period, six such cases were verified that involved seven boys and three girls. Some of these children were forced to relocate out of fear of reprisal by AFP elements. In June 2011, for instance, the 4th Infantry Division reported that it had encountered three children during military operations against NPA in Surigao del Sur province. The names of the boys, from 10 to 12 years of age, were released to the media and the children were labelled as "child soldiers" and accused of having participated in an ambush that targeted AFP soldiers.

Detention of children by the Armed Forces of the Philippines for alleged association with armed groups

22. The detention by AFP and other security forces of children allegedly associated with armed groups also remained of concern during the reporting period. The country task force verified six such incidents that involved six boys and three girls. In May 2012 a 16-year-old boy injured in the crossfire during an armed encounter between AFP and NPA in Agusan del Sur province was brought to a hospital by members of the 25th and 75th Infantry Battalions. After arriving at the hospital, the soldiers were given orders to relocate him before he had been properly treated and the boy was subsequently taken on an eight-hour journey to a military camp hospital. The child was later accused of being an NPA member, was not allowed to communicate with his family and was interrogated. He was eventually released by AFP after 11 days in custody. In another case, on 22 March 2012, in San Andres municipality in

Quezon province, a 16-year-old boy was arrested by the 74th Infantry Battalion for alleged association with NPA. He spent more than a month in a provincial jail before being transferred into the custody of a government social welfare institution.

B. Killing and maiming of children

23. During the period under review, the country task force recorded 100 incidents of killing and maiming. Of these, it verified 42 incidents that involved the injuring of 21 boys and 25 girls, and the killing of 15 boys and 3 girls. Most reports relate to crossfire incidents and indiscriminate shootings during armed encounters. Children have also been victims of improvised explosive device attacks, landmine incidents and unexploded ordnance. Cases have been attributed to MILF (11), NPA (11), ASG (8), AFP (31), CAFGU (8) and unidentified perpetrators (31).

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

24. In the reporting period, 11 cases of killing and maiming attributed to MILF were recorded. Most cases involving MILF were related to fighting between Moro communities. Members of these communities rarely access the public justice system and settlements between warring parties are often brokered by MILF, including instances where children were victims. Conflicts between MILF commanders in affected communities continue to expose to risk civilians, including children. In one incident, on 14 September 2011, an armed encounter between MILF and BIFF commanders in Datu Piang municipality, Maguindanao province, led to the injury of a 17-year-old child in the crossfire. In another incident, on 25 July 2012, a 14-year-old girl in Sultan Sa Barongis municipality, Maguindanao province, was shot and wounded during a dispute between MILF commanders.

New People's Army

25. The country task force recorded 11 incidents of killing and maiming of children attributed to NPA. The armed group continued to conduct high-profile attacks against AFP that often resulted in civilian casualties. Despite its stated commitment to adhere to international humanitarian law, NPA resorts to ambush tactics and attacks with improvised explosive devices in public places. In one case, on 8 December 2010, an NPA ambush on a public boat that carried soldiers and civilians in Las Navas municipality, Northern Samar province, resulted in the killing of a 15-year-old boy. On 14 December 2010, in the same municipality, NPA ambushed elements of the 63rd Infantry Battalion, killing 10 soldiers and a 9-year-old boy. In another incident, on 1 September 2012, members of the Merado Arce Command of NPA threw a grenade at a military outpost in Paquibato district, Davao City, which landed in a public gathering where the community had congregated to watch a circus performance. More than 50 people were injured, including 12 boys and 9 girls from 4 to 17 years of age. NDFP issued an official apology to the families of the victims. No information is available, however, on the actions taken to hold the perpetrators accountable.

Abu Sayyaf Group

26. The country task force was able to attribute responsibility to ASG for eight recorded cases of killing and maiming of children, including through the use of

ambush tactics, landmines and improvised explosive devices. Verification of these cases remains challenging owing to the prevailing situation of insecurity in areas of ASG operations. On 27 November 2011, ASG reportedly bombed a church in Jolo municipality, Sulu province, in which a 9-year-old girl was injured. On 27 November 2011, a bomb explosion in a hotel in Zamboanga City, attributed to ASG, resulted in the injuring of two girls 2 and 4 years of age.

Armed Forces of the Philippines

27. AFP and CAFGU have been involved in 39 incidents of killing and maiming. In the course of its military operations, AFP was reportedly involved in attacks on residences or other locations where NPA fighters were allegedly present. On 18 October 2012, for instance, two boys, 8 and 13 years of age, were killed and one 5-year-old girl was injured when members of the 27th Infantry Battalion strafed their house in Kiblawan municipality, Davao del Sur province. Following this incident, AFP relieved and restricted to their barracks one officer and 11 enlisted personnel, who, at the time of writing, were undergoing pretrial investigation by the General Court Martial. In a similar case, on 25 February 2012, soldiers of the 49th Infantry Battalion opened fire on a residence allegedly harbouring an NPA fighter in Labo municipality, Camarines Norte province, resulting in the death of two boys 7 and 10 years of age, and the injuring of a 14-year-old girl.

Unidentified perpetrators

28. The country task force recorded a further 31 incidents that involved unexploded ordnance and the use of improvised explosive devices by unidentified perpetrators. Of these, 13 cases relate to attacks with improvised explosive devices on schools and 7 relate to grenade-throwing by hooded men riding motorcycles. This resulted in the killing of 7 children and the injuring of 20 children throughout the reporting period. The majority of these cases took place in the region of Central Mindanao.

C. Sexual violence against children

29. During the reporting period, the country task force recorded nine incidents of sexual violence against children in the context of the prevailing situation of conflict, of which three were verified. While the number of incidents may be underreported owing to fear, and fear of stigmatization, the information available suggests that these remain isolated cases. In one incident, on 16 October 2011, a 17-year-old girl was gang-raped by three soldiers of the 16th Infantry Battalion in Baras municipality, Rizal province. While the perpetrators tried to settle the case with the families, they were formally dismissed from their posts and are now facing criminal charges. In another case, on 17 February 2012, a 16-year-old girl was abducted and raped over a three-day period by an AFP officer in Mankayan municipality, Benguet province. Although the alleged perpetrator was charged, the case has been put on hold pending the psychological recovery and testimony of the victim. In a third case, on 1 June 2011, a 17-year-old girl was gang-raped by a number of men, including two active members of CAFGU, during a village celebration in Negros Occidental province. The Provincial Prosecutor's Office did not pursue the case and the suspects were not apprehended. At the time of writing, the family of the victim continued to receive death threats. It is important that AFP put in place mechanisms

to halt and prevent sexual and gender-based violence, take appropriate sanctions against perpetrators and ensure that no adverse action is taken against the victims.

D. Abduction of children

30. During the period under review, the country task force received reports of four cases of abduction of children attributed to ASG, none of which could be verified owing to security constraints. ASG reportedly engaged in kidnap-for-ransom and extortion activities that targeted children, teachers and health-care workers, with a view to gaining financial resources to provide support for its operations. According to anecdotal information, ASG kidnap-for-ransom activities also involved non-ASG community members, including children, acting as lookouts, abductors and guards.

E. Attacks on schools and hospitals

31. In the reporting period, the country task force recorded 150 incidents that affected schools and hospitals. Armed groups, including MILF, NPA and ASG, were responsible for 88 incidents that involved direct attacks on education and health facilities, or damage by grenades, improvised explosive devices or crossfire. AFP was responsible for 62 incidents that affected schools and hospitals, including mainly the military use of schools. It should be noted, however, that the country task force observed a significant decrease in the number of incidents attributed to AFP from 2010 to 2013.

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

32. The country task force verified five incidents attributed to MILF that affected schools, including the partial destruction of three schools and the military use of two others. On 19 May 2010, armed clashes erupted between a MILF commander and the security forces of a local government unit in Sultan Sa Barongis municipality, Maguindanao province. The MILF commander set fire to houses, an elementary school and a *madrasah*. The leadership of MILF later suspended the commander as a disciplinary measure. On 18 August 2011, clashes between MILF and BIFF in Datu Piang municipality, Maguindanao province, resulted in the partial destruction of two elementary schools and serious damage to a *madrasah*, which was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade. MILF was also responsible for the military use of schools. On 24 October 2011, for example, 40 elements of the 113th Base Command used a school in Zamboanga Sibugay province during an encounter with AFP.

New People's Army

33. On 11 May 2010, NPA ambushed a government convoy en route to a polling station in Compostela Valley province. Among the casualties was a schoolteacher acting as part of the board of election inspectors during the national elections of 2010. NPA apologized for the incident in a public statement. In another case, on 25 August 2011, NPA placed an improvised explosive device on the grounds of an elementary school in Panabo municipality, Davao del Norte province. The device was detonated to attract the attention of an AFP detachment recently established by the 67th Infantry Battalion, but did not result in casualties. In two other incidents, NPA conducted attacks on AFP detachments located near schools.

Abu Sayyaf Group

34. During the reporting period, ASG continued to target education and health personnel for extortion. In one incident, in June 2010, classes were suspended in an elementary school in Patikul municipality, Sulu province, allegedly after teachers repeatedly received letters containing threats. As a result, the school closed for a period of six months until adequate security arrangements could be made. In two other incidents, in May 2010, ASG burned down two schools in Basilan province, affecting the education of at least 150 children.

Armed Forces of the Philippines

35. The country task force recorded 62 incidents that affected schools and hospitals, implicating AFP. Throughout the reporting period, a significant decrease was observed in incidents. The majority of these incidents included the military use of schools (28) and rural health units (3), in contravention of Philippines national law (Republic Act 7610). In one case, in November 2010, the 54th Infantry Battalion used a school building in Kili *barangay*, Tubo municipality, Abra province, as military barracks, with two large artillery guns on the school grounds and ammunition stacked in the open. In another incident, in July 2011, the 69th Infantry Battalion established a detachment adjacent to an elementary school in Paradise Embac *barangay*, Paquibato district, Davao City. During the period under review, three armed encounters took place in the immediate vicinity of this school, prompting the community to file a formal complaint with the city council relating to the presence of an AFP unit nearby the school.

Unidentified perpetrators

36. In addition, the country task force verified six cases of threats against or harassment of education and health personnel, and two attacks on hospitals by unidentified perpetrators. As a result of these incidents, an estimated 2,845 children were deprived of their education, either temporarily or for protracted periods of time, mainly in MILF-controlled areas.

37. Concern also remains over the use of schools as polling stations and the participation of education personnel as polling officers during elections, as stipulated in Philippines national law, which may lead to schools and teachers being wrongly considered as legitimate targets of attack. The country task force verified five cases of extrajudicial killings of school personnel by unidentified perpetrators, which caused fear within the community for the safety of schoolchildren. On 3 February 2012, in Palanas municipality, Masbate province, for example, two armed men shot and killed a teacher in front of the children while classes were being conducted.

III. Implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism in the Philippines

38. Since my previous country report on the situation of children in the Philippines, the country task force strengthened its geographic coverage for monitoring and verification activities, and increased awareness among partner organizations about grave violations against children. Furthermore, in May 2010 each member of the country task force formally designated Manila and Mindanao-based monitoring and

reporting mechanism focal points to ensure broad participation of United Nations partners and strengthen field-level engagement. Several training seminars were held in May and October 2012 in order to build the capacity of field-based personnel to proactively collect, document and verify reports. The October 2011 launch of the country task force technical working groups at the Manila and Mindanao levels contributed to the expanded participation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism.

IV. Follow-up to conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

39. Ongoing monitoring and reporting mechanism orientations for country task force members and local and international non-governmental organizations were organized to increase awareness and encourage partners to report violations. In 2012 the country task force trained as "first alerts" more than 530 national human rights lawyers and investigators, government front-line workers, civil society partners and humanitarian staff stationed in conflict-affected areas throughout the Philippines, including areas in the southern Philippines that remain inaccessible to the United Nations. In addition, 526 Mindanao-based security personnel, comprising 479 AFP and 47 Philippine National Police officers and personnel, received training in international humanitarian law, human rights and child protection. With a view to strengthening the capacity of the Government regarding child protection, the country task force and various Government partners, including AFP, agreed to hold periodic meetings, starting in August 2012, to discuss strategies to further institutionalize the Government's inter-agency monitoring, reporting and response system for grave violations against children and to pursue the development of an AFP strategy on children and armed conflict. Serving as the basis for the further development of the monitoring, reporting and response system, the Government has created an inventory of resources and services currently available for victims of grave violations against children. The country task force continues to present specific cases of grave violations to the relevant government partners, including AFP, for their appropriate response.

40. Efforts have been made to amend Republic Act 7610 in order to ensure that children associated with armed groups are not prosecuted. In cooperation with the country task force, the government subcommittee on children affected by armed conflict and displacement of the Council for the Welfare of Children organized a workshop in June 2010 to draft a proposed law for the protection of children affected by armed conflict. The bill seeks to harmonize current legislation and address inconsistencies and gaps, bringing them in line with international standards. The bill seeks to develop a more systematic process of handling children affected by armed conflict and provides a legal framework for the prevention of and response to grave violations against children. The bill, entitled Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (CSAC Bill), was approved on 10 March 2011 by the House of Representatives and similar bills were filed at the Senate level in June 2011. The first hearing on the proposed legislation, held in the Philippine Senate in September 2011, paved the way for the drafting of a communication and advocacy plan for the CSAC Bill in November 2011. Encouraging progress was made when the Philippine Senate organized a technical working group meeting on the CSAC Bill in November 2011 to consolidate all bills filed in the Senate into one single comprehensive bill.

V. Status of dialogue and action plans

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

41. Following the signing in August 2009 of the United Nations-MILF action plan to halt and prevent the recruitment and use of children in Mindanao, MILF appointed a five-person panel for interaction with the country task force on implementation of the action plan. On 20 January 2010, the MILF leadership issued a supplemental general order, reiterating the MILF policy on the non-recruitment of children and setting out sanctions for breaches in the policy and provides for the creation of child protection units within the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF), the armed wing of MILF.

42. During her official visit to the Philippines in April 2011, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict met with the MILF leadership to discuss implementation of the United Nations-MILF action plan. The MILF five-person panel agreed to work with the country task force to establish a timeline for the implementation of the action plan and to ensure better compliance measures geared towards MILF base commands. During an initial registration process after the signing of the action plan, more than 500 children were registered by trained community members with the support of the United Nations so as to ensure that these children have access to such basic services as education, health and community programmes in order to prevent their recruitment.

43. The expiry of the United Nations-MILF action plan in July 2011, after two years of implementation, resulted in a significant period of inactivity, pending the signing by MILF of an addendum on an extension of the action plan. MILF continued to express commitment to the principles of the action plan and on 29 April 2013, the MILF leadership agreed to an open-ended extension that paved the way for further cooperation with the United Nations to fully implement the provisions of the action plan. Recent progress in the Government-MILF peace talks also provides an opportunity for the swift implementation of the action plan.

44. In May 2013 a joint technical-level delegation of the United Nations Children's Fund and the Office of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict visited the Philippines to discuss with the Government and MILF the way forward with regard to the full implementation of the action plan. MILF agreed to work with the country task force on a concrete and time-bound operational plan with benchmarks, with a view to implementing all provisions of the action plan. These benchmarks include training and awareness-raising in MILF base commands and other military camps, compliance monitoring through base command progress reports and follow-up on remaining concerns with MILF base commanders.

New People's Army

45. In April 2011, with the support of the Government and the Office of the Presidential Adviser to the Peace Process, my Special Representative met in Manila with members of the NDFP negotiating panel for talks on the possibility of an action plan to halt and prevent the recruitment and use of children by NPA. Subsequently, in January 2012 a technical team from the Office of my Special Representative met with the panel in Utrecht, the Netherlands, for an initial discussion on child protection concerns. NDFP continues to deny that NPA has any children in its ranks and stated that children aged 15 years and older might be assigned to NPA self-

defence and other non-combat units. On 29 June 2012, NDFP issued a unilateral declaration and programme of action on the rights, protection and welfare of children, rejecting the listing of NPA in my annual report on children and armed conflict, their obligations as a non-State armed group under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the provisions of the Paris Principles related to the definition of children associated with armed forces and groups. While NDFP stated its readiness to continue dialogue with the United Nations for the better protection of children, discussions on the preparation of an action plan have yet to resume.

Armed Forces of the Philippines

46. I am pleased to note that the Government of the Philippines is finalizing the implementation of the monitoring, reporting and response system to prevent and respond to specific incidents of grave violations against children. Technical-level meetings co-chaired by the Council for the Welfare of Children and the country task force, which include the AFP Human Rights Office, have opened up regular interaction with the United Nations on prevention and response to grave violations against children.

47. During her official mission to the Philippines in April 2011, my Special Representative was able to gain the commitment of the Department of National Defence and AFP to collaborate in the development of an operational strategy for the protection of children affected by armed conflict. This strategic plan would aim to address concerns about the military use of schools, the alleged association of children with CAFGU, the detention of children allegedly associated with armed groups, the exposure of children encountered in military operations to the public and the media, and the conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, as well as to set up a process for information-sharing.

48. AFP is also in the process of finalizing draft guidelines on the conduct of operations inside or within the immediate premises of schools and hospitals, which are expected to be launched as an AFP operational directive in the coming months. In addition, with regard to the use of children during military operations, AFP issued directives that prohibit such use of children, assign responsibility to commanders and put in place investigation procedures and corrective measures.

VI. Recommendations

49. I call upon all parties to the conflict in the Philippines to immediately halt all grave violations against children and to put in place measures to prevent further such violations.

50. I welcome the developments in the Mindanao peace process between the Government and MILF, and I encourage both parties to continue their consultations with the country task force towards the integration of child protection issues in the agenda of the peace talks.

51. I encourage the international donor community to provide financial resources in order to assist the country task force to strengthen its human resources capacities for monitoring and reporting, and to provide support for the full implementation of the United Nations-MILF action plan.

A. Recommendations to the Government of the Philippines

52. I welcome the support of the Government with regard to dialogue by the United Nations with non-State armed groups, including MILF and NDFP/NPA, on grave violations against children. I encourage the Government to continue to provide support for the implementation of the MILF action plan.

53. I encourage the Government to continue its dialogue and its cooperation with the country task force on strengthening the capacity of its armed forces to better protect children and prevent violations in conflict-affected areas by integrating international human rights and humanitarian law, notably on child rights and child protection, into relevant training, doctrines, rules of engagement and standard operating procedures and other directives of the military, the police and their auxiliary forces.

54. I call upon the Government to continue to collaborate with and to regularly inform the country task force about progress made regarding the development of an AFP strategy on children and armed conflict, with a view to keeping the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict abreast of developments.

55. I commend the development of standard operating procedures for the armed forces in the Philippines in their interaction with schools and schoolchildren as a positive step towards ensuring the protection of children in military operations and recommend further collaboration with the United Nations in the practical implementation of the procedure.

56. I urge the Government to ensure that the amended version of Republic Act 7610 will not include the arrest, detention and/or prosecution of children allegedly associated with armed groups and/or the parents of such children.

B. Recommendations to non-State armed groups

57. I welcome the signing of the extension of the United Nations-MILF action plan to halt and prevent the recruitment and use of children in Mindanao. I urge continued collaboration with the United Nations with a view to implementing all provisions of the action plan as a matter of priority.

58. I urge MILF to reaffirm its supplemental general order of 2010 and ensure that all necessary military personnel and local communities are aware of its provisions, including sanctions for breaching the order.

59. I strongly urge MILF to establish a complaints mechanism through its command structure, instituting a system for reporting alleged violations against children and for follow-up by MILF.

60. I also urge other listed parties who have not done so to enter into dialogue with the United Nations for the purpose of preparing and implementing an action plan to end the recruitment and use of children, including provisions on United Nations access for awareness-raising, response and compliance-monitoring.

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Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2063 (2012), by which the Council requested me to continue reporting every 90 days on progress in the implementation of the mandate of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). The report includes an update on the situation in Darfur covering the period from 1 April to 30 June 2013. It also includes an assessment of progress against the updated benchmarks and indicators contained in my report to the Council of 16 October 2012 (S/2012/771, annex I).

II. Political development

Negotiations towards an inclusive peace agreement

2. Efforts to secure a comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement for Darfur have yielded limited results. Since the conclusion of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur (Doha Document) between the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement (LJM) in 2011, one breakaway faction of the non-signatory armed movements has signed an agreement adopting the Doha Document, a development which soon thereafter suffered a setback.

3. On 6 April, the Justice and Equality Movement-Sudan, a faction led by Mohamed Basher (JEM-Bashar), formally signed that agreement in Doha, Qatar. Less than two weeks later, JEM-Bashar forces and the forces led by Gibril Ibrahim (JEM-Gibril) clashed on 18 and 19 April near Darma village (30 km north-west of Um Baru, Northern Darfur). Two JEM-Bashar fighters were killed, including a high-ranking field commander, and nine others were injured. On 12 May, while the JEM-Bashar leadership was returning through Chad to Darfur to begin implementation of the Doha Document, Mohamed Bashar, his deputy, Arku Suleiman Dahiya, and a reported eight others from his faction were killed by JEM-Gibril in Bamina (60 km north of Tine, Northern Darfur), near the Sudan-Chad border. A total of 20 JEM-Bashar members were also alleged to have been taken hostage by JEM-Gibril forces. On 25 May, JEM-Bashar announced the selection of Bakheit Abdalla Abdel-Karim as its interim leader and reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Doha Document.

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4. On 4 June, the Implementation Follow-up Commission, provided for in the Doha Document, held an extraordinary meeting in Doha to consider the implications of the event occurring on 12 May on the peace process. The Commission adopted a communiqué condemning JEM-Gibril and demanding the immediate release of the JEM-Bashar members taken hostage. Participants also expressed strong concern about the deteriorating security situation in Darfur and its impact on the civilian population. In that regard, they urged that all the perpetrators of violence in Darfur should be held accountable and brought to justice. Finally, they appealed to the major non-signatory movements to renounce violence and resolve their differences through peaceful dialogue.

5. On 17 and 18 June, the newly appointed African Union and United Nations Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, hosted a retreat in El Fasher for special envoys for the Sudan to discuss current developments across the region, including the state of the peace process, the security and humanitarian situation, and the way forward. Participants included representatives from Canada, China, France, Germany, Japan, Morocco, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, South Africa, Sweden, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the European Union and the African Union. They welcomed the initiative of the Joint Chief Mediator to revitalize the peace process, including through the complementary processes of renewed engagement of the non-signatory movements and the prompt conduct of Darfur-based consultations in a suitable enabling environment in order to promote an inclusive and locally owned peace process. Regarding progress on the former, the Joint Chief Mediator briefed them on his meetings in May with the Presidents of the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Chad, during which each of the leaders had emphasized the importance of an all-inclusive approach for the achievement of durable peace in Darfur. To that end, while in Kampala, he held a meeting with the leaders of the major non-signatory movements, including Minni Minawi, the leader of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA-Minni Minawi); Abdul Wahid, the leader of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA-Abdul Wahid); and a senior representative of JEM-Gibril. The parties welcomed the initiative and agreed to meet with the Joint Chief Mediator after the month of Ramadan.

Implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur

6. The pace of implementing the Doha Document continued to lag behind the revised timetables. In an effort to comprehensively mobilize support for Darfur's development needs, the International Donor Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur was held in Doha on 7 and 8 April. Participants endorsed the Darfur Development Strategy, which was based on the needs assessment conducted by the Darfur Joint Assessment Mission led by the Darfur Regional Authority and international development partners. Against the identified funding requirements of $7.2 billion for the implementation of the Strategy over a period of six years, donors pledged a total of $3.6 billion. The latter included the previous commitment of $2.6 billion by the Government of the Sudan.

7. Donor commitments are still being sought for the Darfur Development Strategy, which faces a funding shortfall of $3.6 billion. Some potential donors, however, have indicated a reluctance to commit funds, given that little progress has been made in the implementation of the Doha Document; that there is recurring

insecurity in some parts of Darfur; and that access restrictions continue to be imposed on humanitarian and development partners and UNAMID.

8. Participants in the fifth meeting of the Implementation Follow-up Commission on the Doha Document, held in Doha on 9 April, expressed concern over the limited movement by LJM and the Government of the Sudan towards its implementation. In particular, they noted the persistent delays related to the implementation of the provisions of the ceasefire and final security arrangements. The continued stalemate over the results of the verification of LJM forces and the failure of the parties to implement the decision of the Joint Commission, as reported in my previous report (S/2013/225, para. 6), were seen as a critical impediment to progress. In addition, establishment of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, a microfinance system for income-generating activities and a compensation fund remained outstanding.

9. On 24 April, LJM announced the suspension of its participation in the Government, including in the Darfur Regional Authority. The move was made in protest over the removal of its Minister of Health in Western Darfur State by the State Legislative Council; the expulsion from the Sudan of the International Republican Institute, a United States Government-sponsored organization that had been providing capacity-building support to LJM and the Darfur Regional Authority; and delayed implementation of the provisions relating to the final security arrangements of the Doha Document, in particular the integration of its ex-combatants into the Sudanese Armed Forces. Subsequent to the emergency meetings held on 25 April, between the First Vice-President of the Sudan, Ali Osman Taha, and the LJM/Darfur Regional Authority Chair, El Tigani Seisi, the parties announced the resolution of their differences, given the commitment by the Government to review the expulsion of the International Republican Institute and to take appropriate steps to address the implementation of the final security arrangements.

10. On 16 May, the Government of the Sudan issued a decree establishing the Darfur Regional Security Committee and appointing its members. The Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Darfur Regional Authority, with the walis (governors) of the five Darfur States acting as deputies. The Minister of Finance and Planning of the Darfur Regional Authority, the Legal Adviser of the Authority and the State security committees are also members. The Committee is responsible for the maintenance of security in Darfur.

11. The Special Prosecutor continued to investigate crimes committed in Darfur. On 28 May, the Special Prosecutor informed UNAMID that a total of 52 cases had been investigated, including 1 in Central Darfur, 1 in Eastern Darfur, 30 in Northern Darfur, 14 in Southern Darfur and 6 in Western Darfur. No further details on the types of crimes or the status of their prosecution were provided to UNAMID.

Darfur-based dialogue

12. With regard to the conduct of the Darfur-based internal dialogue and consultations, on 8 April, the facilitators — UNAMID, the African Union High-level Panel on Darfur and Qatar — endorsed a strategy prepared by UNAMID for the development of the consultations. The facilitators are tasked with establishing a committee, whose members will include representatives of the signatory parties to the Doha Document, civil society, internally displaced persons, refugees, the Darfur diaspora, UNAMID and international partners, to prepare and conduct

the consultations. A concept note to guide the exercise, including modalities for the selection of participants, a communication strategy and budget, is being developed. UNAMID will continue to monitor and report on the enabling environment. In that regard, it will take into account the lessons learned from the arrangements made for, and the conduct of, the conference held in Nyala, Southern Darfur, on 25 and 26 March on the security and development needs of displaced persons, as well as from the incident in which 31 participants under UNAMID protection were abducted en route to the conference by armed assailants (see S/2013/225, paras. 10 and 11). The conference was attended, inter alia, by representatives of civil society and internally displaced persons. In the meantime, the demonstrations held on 5 and 6 April by internally displaced persons in camps in Central and Southern Darfur opposing the Doha Document and protesting the conduct of the International Donor Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur, occurred without major incident.

III. Protection of civilians from physical violence

13. Intercommunal fighting involving militia in Central, Northern and Southern Darfur and clashes between Government forces and the armed movements in Central and Eastern Darfur significantly increased the risk of physical violence perpetrated against the civilian population. Such conflicts, which have increased in intensity and frequency since January 2013, have resulted in an estimated 300,000 people being displaced, more than the combined total displaced in Darfur within the past two years.

14. On 6 April, SLA-Minni Minawi forces seized control of Labado and Muhajeria towns in Eastern Darfur from the Government. In an attempt to dislodge SLA-Minni Minawi, Sudanese Armed Forces aircraft conducted intermittent aerial bombing of suspected rebel positions in the two towns from 6 to 13 April. An estimated 17,100 civilians took refuge around the two UNAMID bases located nearby. Although a UNAMID patrol confirmed two bomb craters near its base in Labado, widespread movement restrictions imposed by Government forces and the armed movements prevented the mission from assessing the full impact of the hostilities, including verifying reports of casualties, which varied widely.

15. On 16 April, Government military forces, reinforced by armed militia and supported by air operations, regained control of the two towns. While the situation in the area remained tense, no further clashes were reported. On 19 April, three days after Government forces regained control of Muhajeria, armed men in military uniforms attacked the nearby UNAMID base. One peacekeeper was killed and two others injured during the exchange of fire. One of the attackers was also killed. UNAMID engaged Government authorities in investigating the attack; however, the perpetrators have yet to be brought to justice.

16. The Government's Humanitarian Aid Commission estimated that over 60,000 people had been displaced as a result of the fighting. UNAMID protected civilians concentrated near its bases; provided primary health-care services; facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance; secured humanitarian personnel operating in the affected areas; and called upon the parties to cease hostilities.

17. Fighting between the parties resumed in Southern Darfur on 22 April, with the Sudanese Armed Forces repelling an attempted attack by SLA-Minni Minawi forces

in the vicinity of Nyala airport. Two days later, local community sources reported armed clashes occurring between the parties in Bileil locality (approximately 47 km south-east of Nyala), including Baba, Marla and Um Gunia villages. On 3 May, SLA-Minni Minawi forces attacked Government Popular Defence Forces based in Joghana and Mashrou (approximately 100 km south of Nyala) reportedly killing six Popular Defence Forces and looting fuel and other supplies. On 8 May, Government forces, supported by armed militia, attacked SLA-Minni Minawi forces in Abu Jabra village (30 km north of Greida). According to community sources, the village was looted and burned, causing the displacement of the civilian population to various locations in Greida and Al Salam localities in Southern Darfur. Movement restrictions imposed by armed militia prevented UNAMID from accessing the area to verify the incident. No further reports of fighting were reported in the area. On 15 May, however, Government authorities alleged that a commercial convoy en route to Nyala had been ambushed by SLA-Minni Minawi forces near Khor Makta (15 km west of Shaeria, Eastern Darfur), in which passengers had been robbed of personal belongings and four of the vehicles had been commandeered.

18. On 9 June, in Nertiti, Central Darfur, Government authorities alleged that a military convoy transporting soldiers' salaries had been ambushed by armed men affiliated with the SLA-Abdul Wahid forces. While the assailants were reportedly prevented from stealing the money, one Government soldier was killed and four injured in the incident. Later in the same day, residents of a nearby camp for internally displaced persons reported that Government soldiers had entered the camp and burned 25 houses and buildings, including a non-governmental organization nutrition centre, and had killed livestock. A national aid worker was killed and several camp residents were injured by the shooting at the camp. The mission increased its patrolling in the area and called on community leaders and local security officials to exercise restraint.

19. Intercommunal fighting continued to be a significant source of insecurity for the civilian population in several parts of Darfur during the reporting period. An attempted robbery in Um Dukhun locality in Central Darfur in early April triggered a series of clashes involving the Misseriya and Ta'aisha tribes, on the one hand, and the Salamat tribe, on the other, across parts of Central and Southern Darfur between 3 and 6 April. According to community sources, the fighting led to the killing of over 100 people from both sides, destruction of property and massive displacement. Repeated attempts by UNAMID to access Um Dukhun in the days that followed were denied by local authorities who maintained that the conflict, which was intercommunal in nature, did not require UNAMID intervention. Tensions subsided shortly after local dispute resolution mechanisms were activated and Government security forces deployed to the area.

20. On 10 April, the tribes agreed to a cessation of hostilities in advance of a reconciliation conference to be held on 30 April. Fighting continued, however, with local community sources reporting clashes between the Misseriya, supported by the Ta'aisha, and the Salamat on 17 April in Rehed el Birdi, Southern Darfur, displacing an estimated 3,000 people to Nyala town. Movement restrictions imposed by Government security forces, however, continued to prevent UNAMID from assessing the full impact of the violence.

21. On 25 April, UNAMID provided protection to an inter-agency mission undertaken to Um Dukhun, which included the Humanitarian Aid Commission

assessing the humanitarian situation and the protection of civilians in the area. According to local authorities, an estimated 11,200 people were displaced by the clashes to areas in Southern Darfur, including 5,000 who were reported to have crossed the border into Chad. The mission delivered essential medical supplies to a clinic operated by a non-governmental organization in Um Dukhun town.

22. Clashes between the tribes on 28 and 29 April, involving attempted attacks on the tribal leadership of both the Misseriya and Salamat, forced the reconciliation conference scheduled for 30 April to be postponed. In support of State efforts to reconcile the feuding tribes, on 6 May, UNAMID transported the Wali of Central Darfur and his delegation to Um Dukhun. Separately, UNAMID met with local government officials and community leaders who stated that the conflict involving the Salamat, Misseriya and Ta'aisha was rooted in unresolved issues related to land ownership. Sporadic fighting between the tribes continued throughout the month of May, including clashes on 27 May in Al Gara'aya and Um Sawri (15 km south of Um Dukhun) in which local sources reported that 32 people from both sides had been killed.

23. On 2 June, UNAMID facilitated the transport of 17 Misseriya and Salamat leaders from Um Dukuhn to Zalingei to participate in the reconciliation conference convened by State authorities. During the conference, both parties presented their grievances, including the list of casualties and damages, to the reconciliation mechanism for consideration in their deliberations on the modalities for the settlement of the dispute between the tribes. Despite the ongoing reconciliation effort, Misseriya and Salamat fighters clashed sporadically throughout several parts of Central Darfur between 10 and 19 June, with reports regarding the number of casualties, destruction of property and infrastructure and population displacement varying widely. A UNAMID patrol tasked with verifying the impact of one such incident, occurring in Orokom village (17 km south-east of Zalingei) on 19 June, was denied access by Misseriya militia surrounding the village. UNAMID reinforced its presence and held its position overnight to protect civilians relocating to Zalingei town and until tensions subsided.

24. In Ed Al Fursan locality, Southern Darfur, clashes between the Beni Halba and Gimir tribes over land ownership, which had begun in Batikha village (95 km south-west of Ed Al Fursan) in February, continued sporadically throughout the months of April and May. Attempts by Southern Darfur State authorities to resolve the dispute, including through a 25 April decree demarcating the administrative borders between the Beni Halba and Gimir tribes in Katilla and Ed Al Fursan localities, proved ineffective. According to local authorities, on 22 May, Beni Halba militias attacked Katilla (38 km south of Ed Al Fursan), a town predominantly inhabited by the Gimir tribe, resulting in an unspecified number of houses and Government buildings destroyed; 31 civilians reportedly killed and 21 injured; and an estimated 13,000 people displaced. Government security forces were deployed to the area to quell the fighting. Clashes continued on 27 and 28 May in Intakana (50 km south of Katilla), resulting in what community sources reported as approximately 90 casualties incurred by both sides. On 23 and 24 June, local authorities reported renewed attacks by Beni Halba militia on several Gimir villages in Katilla. Gimir leaders have since stated their unwillingness to participate in any reconciliation initiatives. Influential tribal leaders engaged by UNAMID to discuss the stalled reconciliation process observed that the Gimir lacked confidence in the

neutrality of State authorities to mediate the dispute, while the Beni Halba were refusing to accept the proposed demarcation of land between the tribes.

25. A reconciliation conference scheduled for 15 April to resolve the ongoing dispute between the Aballa and Beni Hussein tribes over the administration of the Jebel Amir gold mines in Northern Darfur was postponed indefinitely at the behest of the reconciliation committee chaired by the Deputy Wali of Northern Darfur, which cited that more time was needed for the tensions between the groups to subside. UNAMID, nevertheless, continued to support activities to create space for peaceful negotiations. On 12 and 13 April, UNAMID conducted a workshop in El Sereif, Northern Darfur, for Beni Hussein leaders, including prominent members from Central, Northern and Southern Darfur, as well as from White Nile State and Khartoum, to discuss the root causes of the conflict. Similar workshops were sponsored by UNAMID for Aballa leaders in Kutum and Kabkabiya, Northern Darfur. Yet another round of workshops on peaceful coexistence and reconciliation was sponsored by UNAMID for both communities from 13 to 15 May. The outcomes of those initiatives identified strengthening local governance mechanisms, empowerment of the native administration, bringing perpetrators of violence to justice, compensation and respect for land ownership as essential to the resolution of the conflict.

26. In a meeting on 5 May with the Deputy Wali of Northern Darfur, UNAMID was informed that approximately 50,000 people had resumed mining activities in Jebel Amir. State authorities communicated that the mine would not be shut down because such a move would have a negative impact on the already fragile socioeconomic and security environment in the area. No date was specified for the postponed reconciliation conference.

27. Low-intensity conflicts between the tribes continued throughout May and June, often sparked by instances of cattle rustling perpetrated by both tribes. On 21 June, rumour of an impending attack by Aballa militia on El Sereif prompted Beni Hussein militia to gather at Al Jaheira area, outside El Sereif. Despite intervention by local authorities to diffuse tensions and disperse the Beni Hussein militia from the area, Aballa militia later launched an attack on Al Jaheira, reigniting tensions between the tribes. In anticipation of an escalation of hostilities, UNAMID reinforced its temporary operating base in El Sereif town and increased confidence-building patrols in the area, while continuing to urge the leadership of both tribes to end hostilities and proceed with reconciliation negotiations. A delegation of influential Aballa leaders from Khartoum, including leading officials of the National Congress Party, Darfur Regional Authority and the Supreme Council for Nomad Development, also proceeded to the area to promote reconciliation between the tribes.

28. On 27 June, fighting intensified between the tribes in the areas of El Delaba (approximately 15 km north of El Sereif), Jebel Utash (approximately 21 km west of El Sereif), and in Zreaga and Khedira (approximately 25 km north of El Sereif). UNAMID dispatched patrols to the affected areas and evacuated 27 injured civilians from El Sereif to El Fasher.

IV. Security situation and freedom of movement

29. Between 1 April and 26 June, the mission's movements over land were restricted on 40 occasions, compared with 27 in the previous reporting period. In the same period, Government authorities denied 141 out of the 5,435 flight requests made, compared with the 75 denied out of the 4,844 made in the previous period. The majority of the restrictions continued to be imposed by Government forces or the armed movements on UNAMID flights and patrols into areas of ongoing insecurity, including Um Dukhun in Central Darfur, Muhajeriya and Labado in Eastern Darfur and Abu Jabra in Southern Darfur.

30. While humanitarian organizations were able to deliver aid to most of the people in need of assistance in Darfur, including the 1.4 million people living in camps for internally displaced persons, access to populations in conflict-affected areas remained constrained. According to a Government directive on humanitarian work in the Sudan that was issued in March, access by international humanitarian organization to conflict-affected areas is fully restricted. In that connection, intermittent restrictions were imposed by Government authorities on United Nations Humanitarian Air Service flights, humanitarian trucks and personnel to Greida in Southern Darfur; United Nations Humanitarian Air Service flights to move relief supplies and personnel to Um Dukhun in Central Darfur. Restrictions were also imposed on the movement of relief stocks by road to areas in Eastern Darfur.

Safety and security

31. The safety and security situation of UNAMID and humanitarian personnel remained of concern. UNAMID peacekeepers came under attack on three occasions during the reporting period, including the attack on a UNAMID base in Muhajeria, Eastern Darfur. One peacekeeper was killed and two others injured during the incident (see para. 15 above). On 1 May, unidentified armed assailants attacked UNAMID peacekeepers guarding a water borehole near the UNAMID base in Ed Al Fursan, Southern Darfur. One peacekeeper was moderately injured in the exchange of fire. On 28 June, a group of unidentified armed assailants ambushed a UNAMID patrol near Khor Abeche, Southern Darfur. The assailants seized four vehicles and military equipment. One peacekeeper and one national staff member were also briefly detained. No casualties or injuries were reported. An investigation into the incident is ongoing.

32. One national staff member of a non-governmental humanitarian aid organization was killed on 9 June, in a shooting incident involving Government soldiers in Nertiti internally displaced persons camp, Central Darfur (see para. 18 above).

33. On 21 April, four unidentified armed assailants kidnapped an international staff member of the World Food Programme in Nyala, Southern Darfur. Immediate intervention by local security authorities ensured the safe release of the staff member later that day.

34. A total of 50 incidents of banditry involving house break-ins and robberies targeting UNAMID and humanitarian personnel were recorded during the reporting period. On 30 May, three trucks belonging to Supreme, the UNAMID rations contractor, were ambushed en route to Labado in Eastern Darfur by armed militia near Ishma village (25 km east of Nyala, Southern Darfur) and an unspecified amount of supplies were looted. A total of nine carjacking incidents targeting

vehicles of UNAMID, agencies of the United Nations system and international non-governmental organizations also occurred during the reporting period. UNAMID continues to identify shortfalls in security and institute mitigation measures, while calling on Government authorities to hold the perpetrators accountable.

V. Humanitarian situation

35. Continued violence increased the vulnerability of civilians, particularly in parts of Central, Eastern and Southern Darfur. In the past three months, a total of 157,000 people were reported to have been displaced as a result of military clashes and heavy intercommunal fighting.

36. According to Government estimates, over 60,000 people were displaced following military clashes in Muhajeria and Labado towns in Eastern Darfur. Of those, United Nations agencies assessed that 10,100 had sought protection around the UNAMID base in Muhajeria and 7,000 around the UNAMID base in Labado, while others were displaced to areas further south and east of the two towns. UNAMID escorted two humanitarian aid convoys transporting 45 metric tons of food aid, non-food items, water, sanitation and medical supplies for distribution at both locations.

37. Despite Government forces regaining control of the two towns, persistent insecurity forced the bulk of those sheltering next to the UNAMID bases to relocate. Preliminary estimates by humanitarian organizations indicate that 38,000 displaced persons have arrived in the camps for internally displaced persons around Nyala, Southern Darfur (25,500 to Kalma camp; 6,500 to Dereige camp; and 6,000 to Otash camp). An estimated 11,000 people have arrived at the El Neem internally displaced persons camp in Eastern Darfur, while 8,000 remained around the UNAMID base in Labado.

38. Military clashes in Bileil and Greida localities in Southern Darfur led to the displacement of an estimated 23,000 people. Of those, 4,000 have been verified by humanitarian agencies as having arrived at Al Salam and 1,500 at Greida camps. UNAMID provided escorts for humanitarian agencies to assist the new arrivals with food, health, water and sanitation services, as well as non-food items and emergency shelter.

39. Intercommunal clashes involving the Misseriya, Ta'aisha and Salamat tribes in Central and Southern Darfur resulted in the displacement of an estimated 45,000 people. Of those, 27,000 crossed into Chad and were registered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, while the remaining 18,000 people were displaced to various locations in Southern Darfur. Fighting between the Gimir and Beni Halba tribes in Katilla locality, Southern Darfur, led to the displacement of an estimated 29,000 people. Humanitarian agencies conducted needs assessments and provided assistance.

40. Throughout the reporting period, humanitarian agencies continued to address the food and non-food relief needs, including health, water and sanitation of those who were displaced in January by the intercommunal fighting in the Jebel Amir area in Northern Darfur. In April, aid workers distributed food and non-food relief supplies to over 41,000 of those displaced in El Sireif locality, Northern Darfur. In

May, 1.5 tons of medical supplies were provided to health clinics operating in El Sereif and Saraf Umra. A measles vaccination campaign conducted by the State Ministry of Health and the United Nations Children's Fund, reached 47,000 children displaced to Kabkabiya, Saraf Umrah, Abu Gamra, Gera El Zawia, and El Sereif in Northern Darfur.

41. The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, visited the Sudan from 20 to 23 May to assess the challenging humanitarian situation in the country. She noted an overall increase in humanitarian needs on account of additional conflict-induced displacements, particularly in Darfur, and significant shortfalls in funding for humanitarian operations. As of June, only 33 per cent of the $624 million required in the United Nations and Partners' Work Plan for Sudan humanitarian projects in Darfur has been covered. The shortfall has been attributed to donor reluctance, given the limited access to people in need, among other factors. At the conclusion of her visit, the Under-Secretary-General reflected on the ongoing suffering of conflict-affected civilians in the Sudan and called for an end to violence and the resolution of conflict through peaceful means.

VI. Rule of law, governance and human rights

42. The overall number of human rights violations recorded by UNAMID increased from 117 incidents involving 347 victims in the previous period to 126 incidents involving 557 victims in the reporting period (283 victims of violations of the right to life, 236 victims of violations of the right to physical integrity, 30 victims of sexual and gender-based violence and 8 victims of arbitrary arrest and detention). Access restrictions owing to the security situation adversely affected the ability of UNAMID to conduct timely site visits to locations of reported human rights violations and abuses, including to Um Dukhun, Mukjar and East Jebel Mara in Central Darfur; and Um Gonya, Abu Jabra, Marla, Rehad el Birdi, and Katalya in Southern Darfur.

43. During the reporting period, UNAMID recorded 44 incidents of the violation of the right to life involving 283 victims, compared with 40 incidents involving 125 victims in the previous report. Heavy intercommunal fighting involving militias and clashes between Government forces and the armed movements were the primary cause of the fatalities.

44. Attacks on civilians, including internally displaced persons, continued to result in violations of the right to physical integrity. UNAMID recorded 50 incidents involving 236 victims, compared with 49 incidents involving 176 victims in the previous period. Attacks included physical assaults, the razing of homes and villages to the ground and the looting of personal property and livestock. Paramilitary Government forces, specifically the Central Reserve Police, Popular Defence Forces and border guards, were often identified by survivors and community leaders as perpetrators in many of the reported incidents. UNAMID conducted confidence- and capacity-building patrols and provided a visible presence in camps. The mission also helped to empower the local population to contribute to the reduction of crime in conjunction with national police by training 86 community policing volunteers and setting up a total of 142 community safety committees in camps and villages

throughout its area of operations. In addition, UNAMID trained a total of 390 police personnel on human rights, community policing and gender-based violence.

45. UNAMID recorded seven incidents of arbitrary arrest and detention involving eight victims during the reporting period, compared with six incidents involving eight victims in the previous period. In one such incident, occurring on 2 June, Government military intelligence officers released without charge a victim arrested on 12 May for his suspected affiliation with a rebel movement operating in Northern Darfur. Fear of reprisal has contributed to the underreporting of such incidents by victims and community leaders alike.

46. UNAMID recorded 26 incidents of sexual and gender-based violence involving 30 victims, 8 of whom were minors, compared with 22 incidents involving 38 victims, 4 of whom were minors, in the previous reporting period. A total of 16 cases involving 17 victims, 4 of whom were minors, were incidents of rape. Eight cases involving 11 victims, 4 of whom were minors, were incidents of gang rape. The remaining two cases were incidents of sexual harassment involving two victims. As in previous reporting periods, underreporting of sexual and gender-based violence remained a challenge owing to social stigma and the lack of confidence in Government authorities to investigate and prosecute such crime. UNAMID undertook activities to help to address those concerns by conducting workshops on sexual and gender-based violence for a total of 140 Government officials and community leaders throughout Darfur.

47. UNAMID continued to provide technical assistance to both State and non-State counterparts in order to build their capacity to recognize, analyse and proactively address human rights issues in Darfur. Since August 2012, UNAMID has conducted 40 human rights trainings and workshops for 1,200 persons, including State legislators, local government authorities, judges, prosecutors, private sector lawyers, teachers, native administrators and internally displaced persons.

48. Similarly, UNAMID strengthened judicial and corrections capacity in Darfur and supported the functioning of the institutions provided for in the Doha Document. Since August 2012, the mission has delivered a total of 23 training sessions and workshops on justice and corrections issues to a total of 679 participants, including members of the judiciary and legal practitioners, law enforcement officials, members of the Darfur Regional Authority and community leaders.

Child protection

49. UNAMID promoted local ownership of the protection of children agenda through training sessions covering international norms and standards for 90 persons, including local media practitioners, health workers, internally displaced persons and former combatants of LJM. Similar training sessions were conducted to raise the awareness of UNAMID personnel.

50. The action plan to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers by the Sudanese Armed Forces, approved by the Ministry of Defence in August 2012, is pending the approval of the Ministry of the Interior.

VII. UNAMID deployment and operations

51. As at 26 June 2013, the strength of UNAMID civilian personnel stood at 84 per cent of the approved strength of 5,277 (2,914 national staff, 1,082 international staff and 445 United Nations Volunteers).

52. The strength of UNAMID military personnel stood at 14,800, including 14,139 troops, 324 staff officers, 253 military observers and 84 liaison officers.

53. The number of UNAMID individual police officers stood at 2,527, comprising 84 per cent men and 16 per cent women. The authorized 17 formed police units have been deployed.

54. During the reporting period, UNAMID military personnel conducted 13,715 patrols, including 7,412 routine patrols; 2,074 administrative patrols; 2,285 night patrols; 1,058 humanitarian escorts; 572 short-range patrols; and 314 long-range patrols. UNAMID police personnel conducted a total of 16,607 patrols, including 12,041 inside camps for internally displaced persons; 2,907 in villages, towns and markets; 1,299 medium-range patrols; 234 long-range patrols; and 126 firewood and farm patrols.

55. From 1 April to 26 June 2013, the Sudanese authorities issued 1,395 new entry visas for UNAMID personnel. As at 26 June, 802 visas were pending, 454 of which were for civilian police officers, 297 for civilian personnel and 51 for military personnel. UNAMID continued to urge the authorities to approve all visa requests promptly.

56. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2063 (2012), the implementation of the results of the review of UNAMID uniformed personnel continued. For the military component, the repatriation of a Well-Drilling Unit and an Engineering Unit were completed, with one Light Field Engineering Unit rescheduled for December 2013. The deployment of a force reserve company, an infantry battalion and a Military Utility Helicopter Unit are in progress. Adjustments continued to be made to the police component; however, delays in the issuance of visas for incoming police personnel have made it necessary to extend the tour of duty of some police currently serving in the mission in order to maintain the trajectory towards right-sizing of the police component. The deployment of the last unit of the 17 authorized formed police units was completed. Reductions in the mission's overall troop and police strength are scheduled to reach the authorized ceilings by 31 January 2014.

57. Regarding the operational and self-sustainment capabilities of troop and police contingents, only 11 of the 44 military and police units currently deployed to UNAMID have achieved a major equipment serviceability rate above the 90 per cent threshold. Conversely, the serviceability rate of some units has declined, with seven units below 43.6 per cent. In the area of self-sustainment capabilities, only 10 units fully meet the requirements stipulated in the relevant memorandums of understanding. The remainder are lacking some self-sustainment capabilities and are partially supported by the mission. Such shortfalls, which mainly pertain to the serviceability of armoured personnel carriers, continue to adversely affect operations. The Secretariat continued to engage with troop- and police-contributing countries in order to encourage them to swiftly address shortcomings in contingent-owned equipment.

58. On 15 April, the 15th tripartite coordination mechanism meeting between the Government of the Sudan, the African Union and the United Nations was held in Addis Ababa. Discussion focused on issues of access, contingent-owned equipment, the issuance of visas and UNAMID radio frequency. Increased coordination and information-sharing with Government authorities at the technical level was agreed in order to resolve pending mission support issues as they occurred. The Government pledged to resolve the situation regarding the pending visas and to conduct a review, together with UNAMID, of the continued validity of long-standing visa applications for 2011 and 2012. There was no progress towards obtaining a license for UNAMID radio operations.

59. During the reporting period, a total of 27 quick-impact projects were completed; 38 additional projects are ongoing and at various stages of implementation.

60. In April, UNAMID and local implementing partners concluded and handed over the remaining 3 of the first phase of 17 community-based labour-intensive projects for youth who are at risk of joining armed groups or gangs in Darfur. A second phase also commenced, involving 16 projects focused on infrastructure development (building of schools and community centres) and targeting over 2,000 youth across Darfur.

61. UNAMID continued to reduce the threat posed by unexploded ordnance in Darfur. A total of 1,661 km of roads and pathways and 55 km^2 of land were assessed as being free of unexploded ordnance. A total of 51 unexploded ordnances were destroyed. In addition, UNAMID delivered unexploded ordnance risk education training to 13,464 civilians (24 per cent of whom were women and 64 per cent of whom were children).

VIII. Progress against benchmarks

62. Paragraphs 63 to 66 of the present report contain an assessment of the progress made by UNAMID against the updated benchmarks and indicators set out in my report of 16 October 2012 (S/2012/771, annex I).

63. Progress against the first benchmark, which pertains to the achievement of a comprehensive political solution to the Darfur conflict, was limited during the reporting period. This was primarily due to the resolve of the non-signatory movements, as stated in the manifesto of the Sudanese Revolutionary Front umbrella group, to pursue a change in the central government through military means. Continued military clashes between Government forces and the non-signatory armed movements precluded the resumption of peace negotiations between the movements and the Government of the Sudan, despite ongoing efforts by the Joint Chief Mediator to identify a common ground for negotiations. The leadership of the one breakaway faction, JEM-Bashar, which had signed the agreement adopting the Doha Document, was killed, soon thereafter, by JEM-Gibril forces. Regarding the implementation of the Doha Document, notwithstanding the holding of the International Donor Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur and its endorsement of the Darfur Development Strategy, delays in the implementation of several of the provisions contained in the Doha Document continued, particularly in respect of the final security arrangements, reconciliation, compensation and initiation of reconstruction and development projects for Darfur.

64. The second benchmark relates to the restoration of a stable and secure environment throughout Darfur. During the reporting period, reports of civilian casualties and widespread population displacement remained high owing to military clashes and a considered increase in heavy intercommunal fighting in several parts of Darfur. That, together with attacks on UNAMID and the restrictions imposed on its movement by Government authorities and armed groups, contributed to the lack of progress against the benchmark. Against such a backdrop, and under the access permitted, UNAMID contributed to the protection of civilians, facilitated the safe delivery of humanitarian aid and promoted reconciliation efforts at the local level.

65. The third benchmark concerns strengthening the rule of law, governance and the protection of human rights. The overall human rights situation in Darfur remained of serious concern. Incidents of human rights violations and abuses, including those related to the violations of the right to life and physical integrity, continued unabated, while lack of accountability for those violations remained endemic. Although UNAMID continued to support capacity-building for Government authorities, the Darfur Regional Authority and civil society groups with a view to protecting and promoting human rights and to upholding the rule of law, indications of progress against the benchmark were minimal.

66. The fourth benchmark pertains to stabilizing the humanitarian situation and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the conduct of early recovery. Widespread deterioration of the security situation, particularly in Central, Eastern and Southern Darfur owing to heavy intercommunal violence and military clashes, continued to cause substantial displacement; significantly increasing the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance. In addition, access restrictions imposed by Government authorities and the armed movements continued to hinder the conduct of timely humanitarian needs assessments and the distribution of urgently needed relief aid to affected populations. That, together with attacks and the constant threat of kidnapping and carjacking involving UNAMID and humanitarian aid workers during the reporting period resulted in a continued regression against the benchmark.

IX. Financial aspects

67. The General Assembly, by its resolution 66/279, appropriated the amount of $1,448.6 million for the maintenance of the Operation for the period from 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013. As of 20 June 2013, the 2013/14 budget is under consideration by the General Assembly.

68. As at 20 June 2013, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMID amounted to $113.2 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $1,254.2 million.

69. Reimbursements to contributing Governments for troops and formed police costs, and for contingent-owned equipment costs has been made for the period up to 30 April 2013 and 31 March 2013, respectively, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

X. Observations

70. Since my previous report (S/2013/225), efforts aimed at a comprehensive and all-inclusive peace for Darfur continue to be fraught with challenges. These include, in particular, increasing and widespread intercommunal fighting in several parts of Darfur and continued military clashes between Government forces and non-signatory armed movements. Most worrisome is the devastating impact that those developments have had on innocent civilians, and the obstacles they have created for humanitarian operations and the implementation of the Doha Document.

71. I am deeply disturbed by the killing of Mohamed Bashar, the leader of JEM-Bashar, and several other members of his faction by JEM-Gibril forces shortly after JEM-Bashar had become a signatory party to the Doha Document. I am concerned by the potential of this incident to erode confidence in a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Darfur. However, I note that JEM-Bashar has announced new leadership and has reaffirmed its commitment to the implementation of the Doha Document. A political solution to the conflict in Darfur remains the only viable option for all belligerent parties. The pursuit of political objectives through military means over the past 10 years has only contributed to the prolonged suffering of the people of Darfur. I therefore reiterate my call upon the Government of the Sudan and the remaining non-signatory armed movements to immediately cease hostilities and commit to peaceful negotiations, without preconditions.

72. Two years have passed since the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement signed the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. Implementation of its provisions continues at an unacceptably slow pace. Tangible improvements in the lives of the people of Darfur, including through improved security, reconstruction and development, support for voluntary and sustainable returns and the promotion of justice and reconciliation, have yet to materialize.

73. The International Donor Conference for Reconstruction and Development in Darfur, held in Doha on 7 and 8 April, was a welcome development in advancing the achievement of a sustainable peace for Darfur. The Darfur Development Strategy, which was endorsed by donors and includes tangible peace dividends, is a practical plan for the long-term recovery and development of Darfur. I urge donors and the Government of the Sudan to promptly honour the pledges made for the implementation of the Strategy. I also encourage the Government of the Sudan and the Darfur Regional Authority to swiftly address donor concerns related to security and access in Darfur.

74. I remain deeply concerned about the prevailing security situation in Darfur, which has, without a doubt, deteriorated over the past six months. A combination of sporadic military clashes and, in particular, heavy intercommunal fighting, has contributed to an alarming 300,000 people displaced since January 2013. I call upon all belligerent parties to refrain from attacks on civilian areas and remind both the Government of the Sudan and the non-signatory armed movements of their responsibilities under international humanitarian law to ensure the safety and security of the civilian population. I urge the Government of the Sudan to do more to protect civilians, promote reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among communities in conflict and establish effective strategies to address issues related to land ownership and resource management, in particular.

75. It is unfortunate that against such a backdrop of increasing protection and humanitarian needs in Darfur, UNAMID and humanitarian actors continue to face impediments to their operations. Restrictions of movement, in particular to conflict-affected areas, and delayed clearances for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to communities in need are indeed disappointing. I once again call upon all parties to the conflict to cooperate fully with UNAMID and humanitarian organizations, lift all impediments and allow the mission and those organizations to implement their respective mandates without restriction.

76. In that context, in particular in the absence of an inclusive peace agreement, it remains essential that UNAMID continue to contribute to the protection of civilians; facilitate the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance and assist the signatory parties in the implementation of the Doha Document. Accordingly, I recommend that the Security Council consider extending the mandate of UNAMID by one year.

77. UNAMID, together with the African Union High-level Panel on Darfur and Qatar, will work to ensure that the implementation of the Darfur-based internal dialogue and consultations provided for in the Doha Document begins in earnest to promote local ownership of the Darfur peace process, increase its inclusiveness and inform a national dialogue on the future of the Sudan. UNAMID, in line with successive Security Council resolutions, will support the development and conduct of the consultations and will continue to monitor and report on the enabling environment in which all Darfur stakeholders are able to participate freely and without fear of reprisal.

78. Turning to the safety and security of UNAMID and humanitarian personnel, I condemn, in the strongest terms, the attack on the UNAMID base in Muhajeria which resulted in the death of one peacekeeper. I offer my sincere condolences to the Government of Nigeria and the family, friends and colleagues of the fallen peacekeeper. I was equally disturbed to hear of the killing of a national aid worker during a shooting incident inside a camp for internally displaced persons in Nertiti. Such acts are reprehensible and a violation of international law. I call upon the Government to bring the perpetrators of these heinous acts to justice.

79. I am relieved and grateful for the timely intervention by Government authorities, which secured the release of an aid worker within hours of his abduction. I expect the Government to bring to account those responsible for this and other criminal attacks perpetrated against those working to alleviate the suffering of the people of Darfur.

80. In conclusion, I would like to welcome Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the new African Union and United Nations Joint Special Representative and Joint Chief Mediator for Darfur, who assumed his duties on 1 April 2013. I also wish to express my gratitude for the service of the two outgoing UNAMID Deputy Special Representatives, Mohamed B. Yonis, who deserves much praise for his dedicated service to UNAMID for six and a half years in various capacities, including Deputy Joint Special Representative (Operations and Management), and Aichatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, who served as the Deputy Joint Special Representative (Political) from June 2011 to June 2013 and Acting Head of Mission and Joint Chief Mediator ad interim from August 2012 to May 2013. Finally, I should like to express my sincere appreciation to the men and women of UNAMID and all humanitarian aid workers for their tireless efforts, despite the setbacks encountered in recent months.

United Nations S/2013/421

Security Council

Distr.: General
15 July 2013

Original: English

Letter dated 15 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan regarding the barbaric attack against the Tanzanian peacekeepers in South Darfur State (see annex). The statement condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the attack against the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) peacekeepers, which was perpetrated by Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)-Minni Minawi. The attack is another piece of stark evidence that proves its rejection of the peace process.

I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daffa-Alla Elhag Ali **Osman**
Permanent Representative

13-39487 (E) 160713 160713

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 15 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Government of the Sudan conveys its sincere condolences to the families of the victims of the disgraceful attack on the forces of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in Khor Abeche, Southern Darfur; to the United Republic of Tanzania, the country of the victims; and to UNAMID.

The Government of the Sudan condemns the attack in the strongest possible terms. The attack is a desperate attempt to thwart the noble mission of UNAMID and undermine the peace process in Darfur, at a time when the security situation in the region has improved markedly. This cowardly act will not deter the Government of the Sudan from continuing its efforts to achieve comprehensive peace in Darfur and extend every form of support and cooperation to UNAMID. The Government is committed to conducting a prompt investigation into the incident and bringing the perpetrators to justice.

The Government wishes to make it clear that the so-called Sudan Liberation Movement Army-Minni Minawi is responsible for the brutal attack. This is yet another sign that that rebel movement is intent not only on rejecting the peace process, but also on targeting those who work for its success and seek to prepare a humanitarian situation that would allow the displaced persons to return, settle in their villages and resume their normal lives.

The Government of the Sudan recalls that the Minawi movement and its allies in the so-called Revolutionary Front are the greatest threat to peace in the region. They are now openly targeting everyone who works for peace, security and stability in the region, as is clearly shown by this latest incident, not to mention the murder by the Jibril Ibrahim faction on 12 May 2013 of Justice and Equality Movement leaders who had signed the Doha Document. It is time for the international community to take steps to guarantee an end to such attacks by criminal groups, hold the perpetrators of the humanitarian crimes accountable and deprive them of all forms of support and cooperation.

United Nations S/2013/422

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 July 2013

Original: English

Letter dated 16 July 2013 from the Permanent Representatives of Austria, Poland and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey to you on behalf of Austria, Poland and Switzerland, and through you to the esteemed members of the Security Council, the recommendations elaborated on the basis of the international conference on "The Safety of Journalists — Current Challenges", which took place in Warsaw on 23 and 24 April 2013 (see annex). The conference was organized in cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, the Embassy of Austria and the Embassy of Switzerland to Poland. The conference was attended by the representatives of international organizations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, national governments, civil society, the media and academia. The recommendations of the meeting were prepared by the co-hosts of the conference, Austria, Poland and Switzerland, in close cooperation with the conference participants.

We would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Martin **Sajdik**
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Ryszard **Sarkowicz**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Poland
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Paul **Seger**
Permanent Representative of Switzerland
to the United Nations

13-39638 (E) 170713

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Annex to the letter dated 16 July 2013 from the Permanent Representatives of Austria, Poland and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Recommendations of the international conference on "The Safety of Journalists — Current Challenges"

Warsaw, 23 and 24 April 2013

How to improve the safety of journalists

On 23 to 24 April 2013 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, in cooperation with the Embassy of Switzerland and the Embassy of Austria in Warsaw, organized an international conference on the safety of journalists. Among the participants were State representatives, representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), journalists and representatives of non-governmental organizations. The discussions led to the following recommendations to improve the safety of journalists:

1. Governments at the national, regional and local levels should fulfil their duty to ensure the protection of human rights of everyone, without distinction of any kind. They should promote freedom of expression as a cornerstone of democratic societies and recognize the key role of journalists therein.

2. International institutions and Governments should condemn attacks against journalists and violations of their rights. International institutions and Governments should call on all relevant actors to comply with existing standards on the protection of journalists.

3. Governments at the national, regional and local levels, international organizations, civil society and media organizations should foster dialogue and cooperation in order to ensure the protection of the freedom of expression and information and in particular the safety of journalists. In this context, international cooperation between ombudsman institutions and national human rights institutions plays an important role and should be encouraged.

4. Authorities should provide conditions for a safe media environment to enable journalists to perform their work independently and without any interference by, inter alia, strengthening national legal frameworks in this regard and by implementing such frameworks. They should publicly contest attempts to silence critical voices and raise awareness regarding the crucial role of journalists and the media for societies based on the rule of law.

5. Authorities should ensure the necessary protection of journalists and their families. All cases of violence against journalists should be investigated, and the perpetrators of crimes against journalists must be brought to justice. Every effort has to be made to end the impunity of perpetrators. Therefore law enforcement bodies and the judiciary should be trained to effectively and promptly investigate violations of the freedom of the media and to conduct the respective proceedings.

6. The protection of journalists should cover all news providers, both professional and non-professional, as well as journalistic sources and it should not

only extend to times of conflict, but also to times of peace. Further consideration should be given to the issue of the definition of a journalist.

7. Further efforts should be made to improve the existing monitoring mechanisms, to encourage their close cooperation and to develop a specific international monitoring mechanism for the safety of journalists. Better cooperation and coordination among various international, regional and local actors, including in effective early warning mechanisms, should be ensured.

8. Governments should ensure full cooperation with existing human rights protection mechanisms, in particular with special rapporteurs and representatives, who play a crucial role in promoting freedom of expression, as well as with UNESCO, which has a leading role within the United Nations system in this regard. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions should be encouraged to continue addressing the issue of the safety of journalists in their work.

9. Governments need to work towards improved access to the Internet, particularly in the developing world. Developed countries should continue to support these efforts. Measures to expand Internet access, openness and resilience to address censorship or mass surveillance by communication technology should be promoted.

10. The national legal frameworks on the freedom of expression online and offline should be strengthened. Internet regulatory solutions, reflecting international standards, should be introduced in an open and transparent manner and cover human rights aspects. Internet security should not in any way hamper or adversely affect the realization of the freedom of expression.

11. Special training on all aspects of safety, including on how to obtain assistance nationally and internationally, should be provided for journalists and supported by media organizations and enterprises. The international community should assist in this process, where necessary.

United Nations S/2013/423

Security Council

Distr.: General
16 July 2013

Original: English

Letter dated 16 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to write to transmit to you a letter from the representative of the Syrian Coalition dated 15 July 2013 in advance of the Security Council debate on "The protection of civilians in armed conflict: protection of journalists", to be held on 17 July 2013 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mark Lyall **Grant**

13-39619 (E) 170713

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Annex to the letter dated 16 July 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the National Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, I have the honour to refer to the open debate of the Security Council on "The protection of civilians in armed conflict: protection of journalists", to be held on 17 July 2013.

Freedom of expression, enshrined in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is a fundamental right and the basic foundation for building a free and democratic society. Without this freedom, journalists would be unable to expose stories in the public interest and hold political leaders to account. This also holds true in times of armed conflict. In Syria, journalists serve a critical function in ensuring that the international community is aware of and does not forget the daily atrocities and human rights abuses perpetrated by a brutal regime against its own people.

In 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1738 (2006), in which it recognized the critical role that journalists play in reporting during times of conflict and urged all parties involved in situations of armed conflict to respect the professional independence and rights of journalists, media professionals and associated personnel as civilians.

In anticipation of the upcoming debate of the Security Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the Syrian Coalition asks that the Council take this opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to the protection of journalists and seek public assurances from the Syrian regime that it will respect and abide by international law to protect civilians and journalists in Syria.

Over the course of the past 28 months, Syria has become the deadliest country in the world for journalists. The Doha Centre for Media Freedom and the Syrian Journalists Association estimate that between 111 and 153 journalists have been killed during this period. The Syrian regime has banned professional media workers and citizen journalists from reporting on the Syrian conflict, and has systematically targeted innocent civilians with unlawful killings, torture, enforced disappearances, abductions and intimidation. Its systematic attempts to stop journalists from reporting on the Syrian conflict have so far failed to silence the voices of those suffering from the regime's atrocities.

The regime's use of violence against journalists remains a source of widespread concern. In May 2013, the General Assembly strongly condemned all violations of international humanitarian law by the Syrian authorities and the Government-affiliated *shabbiha* militias, including the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists (General Assembly resolution 67/262).

A year earlier, in July 2012, the Human Rights Council had already drawn attention to the regime's actions against journalists when it condemned the regime's continued extrajudicial killings, the killing and persecution of protestors, human rights defenders and journalists, cases of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, interference with access to medical treatment, torture and ill-treatment (Human Rights Council resolution 20/22).

The targeted and systematic killing of journalists by the Syrian regime constitutes a direct violation of international law, as outlined in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Additional Protocol I, as well as in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. These laws clearly stipulate that persons taking no active part in the hostilities shall in all circumstances be treated humanely and shall not be subject to violence to life and person, hostage taking, outrages to personal dignity or extrajudicial sentences (Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 3 (1)).

In disregard of international law, the international society's public concerns and repeated condemnations, the Syrian regime has continued to arrest, detain, torture and kill journalists at will. As the Security Council prepares to debate how to protect civilians in armed conflict, the Syrian Coalition respectfully requests that the Council denounce the Syrian regime's use of violence against journalists in the strongest possible terms.

We further ask that the Council apply more pressure on the Syrian regime to end its campaign of violence against our country's civilian population, which continues to inflict immense humanitarian suffering on our people as is currently demonstrated by the regime's ongoing attacks on the city of Homs. Ultimately, this violence will only end when the necessary measures are taken to support Syria's transition to a democratic and pluralistic State in which freedom of opinion and expression are respected.

The Syrian Coalition reaffirms its own commitment to protecting the right to free speech and ensuring the safety of journalists. In partnership with the Free Syrian Army, it will strive to ensure that opposition forces uphold international humanitarian law and norms, and that measures are in place to protect journalists operating in the liberated parts of Syria.

I would be most grateful if you would share the present letter with the members of the Security Council in the context of the Council's debate on this important issue.

(*Signed*) Najib **Ghadbian**
Representative of the Syrian Coalition